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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/750,896	12/28/2000	Jerome Francis Maxwell	199-1244	2744

7590 08/27/2003

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EXAMINER

TON, ANABEL

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2875

DATE MAILED: 08/27/2003

CH

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/750,896

Applicant(s)

MAXWELL ET AL.

Examiner

Anabel M Ton

Art Unit

2875

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 June 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 and 15-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 and 15-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-7 and 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ayres et al (6,404,333).
3. Ayres discloses the claimed invention except for the process of making each of the components by injection molding and molding the components together to make a final product. With regards to the injection molded bookplate molded to the injection molded mask forming one component and an injection molded dial molded directly onto the injection molded back plate, this is a process limitation in a product claim; the presence of process limitations on product claims, which product does not otherwise patentably distinguish over prior art, cannot impart patentability to the product. In re Stephens 145 USPQ 656 (CCPA 1965). With regards to the molded mask and molded back plate molded as a single component, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to do so, since it has been held that forming in one piece an article which has formerly been formed in two pieces and put together involves only routine skill in the art. *Howard v. Detroit Stove Works*,

Art Unit: 2875

150 U.S. (1893). Furthermore, Ayers discloses in column 5, lines 38-41, that the display and the housing can be formed as an integral unit.

4.

- An appliqué (claim 11);
- The injected molded dial comprises a clear polycarbonate (col. 5, lines 34-41);
- A lens (98);
- Light emitting diode backlighting (42)
- With regards to the mask and back plate comprising acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use such a material since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Furthermore, the abovementioned material is well known in the injection molding art for its light weight (please see cited prior art Nomura et al);

- With regards to claim 15, column 5, lines 38-42 discloses the display being formed by being molded as an integral unit. Inherently this would require, while being molded, to have each layer individually formed to form an integral unit. With regards to a method of manufacturing these components being injection molding, the process of injection molding components is old and well known in the art for the purpose of making

these components light weight and are known for their good moldability and resistance to warping deformation (please see cited prior art Nomura et al).

### ***Response to Arguments***

5. Applicant's arguments filed 06/23/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants arguments are not persuasive for the following reasons:

6. Applicant argues that the molded limitation in claim 1 is not a process limitation because the limitation "molded" refers to a structural limitation and not a process limitation. The claim taken, as a whole is an instrument cluster fabricated by injection molded components made of a first and second material, the injection molded back plate and injected molded mask are molded as a single component. Applicant has chosen to use injected molded components as material for the mask and back plate and dial. Ayres, although not teaching the back plate and mask and dial as injected molded components, does teach these components as made into one instrument cluster made by a different process than that of the instant invention. Please note that once the examiner provides a rationale tending to show that the claimed product appears to be the same or similar to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process, the burden shifts to applicant to come forward with evidence establishing an unobvious difference between the claimed product and the prior art product. In re Marosi, 710 F.2d 798, 802, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir.1983). The Nomura et al reference cited in the prior office action and the present office action teaches the utility and preference of

Art Unit: 2875

using injection molded components as stated in the above rejection. This teaching in combination with the Ayres reference teaches that it would have been obvious to use injection molded parts in an instrument cluster such as Ayres since injection molded components are well known for the purpose of making these components light weight and are known for their good moldability and resistance to warping deformation.

### ***Conclusion***

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anabel M Ton whose telephone number is (703) 305-1084. The examiner can normally be reached on 08:00-16:30.

Application/Control Number: 09/750,896

Page 6

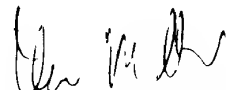
Art Unit: 2875

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sandra O'Shea can be reached on (703) 305-4939. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

Anabel M Ton  
Examiner  
Art Unit 2875

AMT

  
Thomas M. Smith  
Primary Examiner